



HEALTH AFFAIRS

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301-1200

JK

JUN 30 2003

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-6035

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This is an interim response to the reporting requirement prescribed in Section 8147 of the Department of Defense (DoD) Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2002 directing the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a joint comprehensive assessment of a number of options to identify and evaluate changes to DoD and the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) health care delivering policies, methods, practices and procedures.

Last May, we advised you that we projected this report would be completed by July 2003. The VA/DoD Joint Assessment Study is now being conducted under the leadership of the DoD/DVA Health Executive Council. While it was originally estimated the study would begin in July 2002, the study contract was not awarded to Mitretek, Inc. until September 2002. I anticipate we will complete the study and forward it to you by December 2003.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William Winkenwerder, Jr.", is positioned above the printed name.

William Winkenwerder, Jr., MD

cc:
Representative Ike Skelton